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COCA CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTORS OF DANCE HONORED AT NATIONAL DANCE TEACHER AWARDS

Dance Teacher Awards Recognize Extraordinary Dance Educators Shaping the Next Generation of Dancers

ST. LOUIS (August 16, 2022)—COCA Co-Artistic Directors of Dance Antonio Douthit-Boyd and Kirven Douthit-Boyd have been selected to receive [Dance Teacher Awards](#) at the 2022 Dance Teacher Awards held at The Sheen Center for Thought & Culture in NYC on Thursday, August 18. The Douthit-Boyd's are among eight extraordinary dance educators who will be celebrated for shaping the next generation of dancers.

Dance Teacher Awards are given to dance educators who have a unique impact on their students and/or community, strive to bring out the best in their students as dancers and people, have a thoughtful and forward-thinking approach to pedagogy, are dedicated to their own continued learning, prioritize dancers' mental and physical health and safety, and are committed to anti-racism, equity, and inclusion.

"It's incredible to be honored with so many mentors, teachers, and legends from the dance community. What makes this moment so memorable for me is that I get to share it with my best friend and husband," said Antonio Douthit-Boyd, COCA Co-Artistic Director of Dance. "Thanks to DanceTeacher Magazine for this recognition and to all our students and faculty for trusting in us to help shape the future of dance."

"It is an honor to be recognized alongside so many inspiring dance educators. This achievement is confirmation that I need to stand firmly in my beliefs of what it takes to elevate the dance experience for our community," added Kirven Douthit-Boyd, COCA Co-Artistic Director of Dance. "I'm fortunate to serve the brilliant young minds in St. Louis, and I look forward to shaping many generations to come!"

As Co-Artistic Directors of Dance at COCA, the Douthit-Boyd's oversee the Pre-Professional Division Dance Program, which includes three student companies—Ballet Eclectica, COCA dance, and COCA Hip-Hop Crew, and provides advanced curriculum to student artists who have committed to training in dance. They also manage all aspects of COCA's broader dance department, which provides classes for students of all ages and backgrounds.

Prior to COCA, they were principal artists with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, performing internationally and working with world-renowned choreographers. In 2021, they received the Excellence in Arts Award from the Arts and Education Council in St. Louis.

The other 2022 Dance Teacher Award honorees include Kay Mazzo, Risa Steinberg, Ronald Alexander, Kristine Elliott, Ana Nery Fragoso, and Yvonne Gutierrez.

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ABOUT COCA

COCA's mission is to *enrich lives and build community through the arts*. With a commitment to equity and access, COCA serves as a regional hub for learning in and through the arts for all ages from all backgrounds. One of the most diverse cultural institutions in St. Louis, COCA serves more than 50,000 students, audience

members, artists, and families from more than 200 zip codes across the St. Louis region every year. The fourth largest multi-disciplinary arts organization in the country, COCA is committed to supporting the vitality and creativity of more than 200 artists at the heart of their work in schools, community centers, local business, cultural organizations, and on-site at its campus in University City.